GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1041
ANSWERED ON:29.04.2016
Pesticides in Food Items
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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has found excessive use of banned chemicals, pesticides, growth hormones in fruits and vegetables across the country leading to health problems, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Government has directed the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) commissioners of all States/UTs to inspect and monitor food items in order to check the use of pesticides in food items viz., fruits, vegetables, soft drinks and beverages, if so, the details thereof along with the monitoring mechanism to ensure strict compliance of the directions;

(c) whether the Government has prescribed Maximum Residue Level (MRL) for pesticides in food items across the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the corrective steps taken by the Government to curb the use of pesticides in food items?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA)
(a): The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has informed that it is aware of some reports that have appeared in the media regarding higher presence of pesticides in food items. However, details of cases leading to health problems due to excessive use of banned chemicals, pesticides, growth hormones, etc. are not maintained centrally by FSSAI.
(b): FSSAI has issued a circular to Food Safety Commissioners of all State/UT Governments emphasising the need for periodical inspection and monitoring of major fruit and vegetable markets, soft drink and ready to serve beverages in the context of the directions of the Supreme Court of India. No separate enforcement data regarding pesticide residues in food items is, however, maintained centrally by the FSSAI. However, based on the information made available by the State/UT Governments, details of food samples received, analysed, found adulterated/misbranded, and action taken during 2014-15, are as under :-
No. of samples received
83265
No. of Samples Analysed 74010
No. of Samples found adulterated and Misbranded 14599
No. of Cases Launched 10536
No. of Convictions/ Penalties Convictions 1402
Penalties 2795

(c): The Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulations, 2011 prescribe tolerance limits of insecticides for specified food products.

(d): The enforcement of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and Rules and Regulations thereunder rests with State/UT Governments. Regular surveillance, monitoring & sampling of food products is undertaken by State/UT Governments. Random Samples of food items are drawn by the State Food Safety Officers and sent to the laboratories recognized by FSSAI for analysis. In cases, where samples are found to be not conforming to the provisions of the Act and Regulations thereunder, penal action is initiated against the offenders.